

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE.

Probably the most abiding impression which the student, at any rate, receives from the Conference, is the atmosphere of immense enthusiasm for the ideals of our Union—ideals common now to so many people in different parts of the world. This Conference was certainly among the most enjoyable, and was peculiarly interesting in that, in an educational centre such as Bristol, the schools could take a more than usually prominent part.

Most of the meetings were held in the Fine Arts Academy, where there was a Loan Exhibition of pictures—of all kinds and to suit (or to offend) all tastes. The audience were confronted by a large nightmare, the subject of which was supposed to be peculiarly appropriate to the Conference, and which was certainly impossible to overlook!

It is not necessary to give a detailed account of all the lectures, as they will be published in the *Parents' Review*, but notes on some of them may be of interest.

The central idea underlying the Conference this year was "Joy," and the motto chosen was from Shelley, "I love all that thou lovest, Spirit of Delight!" Professor Lloyd Morgan (Principal of the University of Bristol), in his address of welcome on Friday afternoon, spoke on character, which he said was the whole, of which knowledge, interest, and expression are but aspects. He quoted Canon Glazebrook's saying, that "men of ability are as common as blackberries, but men of character are very rare, and they are the salt of the earth." Although we cannot endorse his views on the "child mind," which, he said, was very different from that of the adult, and must undergo "metamorphosis and development, not merely growth," there were helpful suggestions on the environment which each makes for himself by the way in which he regards his

surroundings. It is the duty of the teacher to "help the child to make his environment and to make it worthily."

Lord Lytton replied, and showed that the P.N.E.U. was a society that counted for something, and having reached its twenty-first year, was no longer in the experimental stage.

At the evening meeting in the Clifton Grammar School there were five hundred people. Mrs. Franklin read a welcome message of good wishes from Miss Mason, after which Lord Lytton introduced Dr. Greville Macdonald, who was to strike the keynote of the Conference in his lecture on "The Child's Inheritance." Perhaps the most inspiring thought that he gave us was his elaboration of the fact that the biologist can find no structural difference in the embryo which is to develop into the shell-fish, the bird, or the man—vast, infinite as is the difference in potentiality. Magic lantern slides made the biological part of the lecture clearer.

Saturday morning was particularly delightful. Professor Campagnac's paper on "Children's Books" was quite excellent and thoroughly P.N.E.U. As he was not present to read it himself, those who see it only in the *Parents' Review* will lose less than they will in most of the papers.

Miss Parish's demonstration lesson made perhaps more impression than anything else in those who heard of "Picture Talks" for the first time. If some understood the objects of such a lesson so little as to complain that it did not teach the children to draw, or to compare it with Ablett's "snapshot" drawing, they were very much in the minority. The picture chosen was a reproduction of Leonardo's cartoon of the Holy Family (in the Diploma Gallery, Burlington House), and the lesson given as for children of Class III. Miss Parish succeeded so well in conveying her own feeling of reverence and appreciation of beauty, that some account of the lesson may be of interest, the more so that it will not be published. Each child was asked to

name her favourite picture, and the teacher showed that the best pictures are those in which we see more the more we look at them. She gave the children some ideas about Leonardo da Vinci, dwelling especially on his many-sided nature, his history, and his love of beauty. She read passages from Vasari, and from Leonardo's Memoirs, choosing as a leading thought his words: "Thou, O God, doth sell unto us all good things at the price of labour." They were then shown the picture, and told how they might make for themselves a mental picture gallery. While describing it from memory, they were able to discover the subject. By way of recapitulation, about half a dozen questions on the artist's life and the picture were written on the blackboard, and answered orally, *e.g.*, "What do we learn from Leonardo's life?" "Are his pictures beautiful? If so, why?" One little girl said that they are beautiful because "he loved things so." After the children had gone, Miss Parish read a paper on "Joy in Art," and answered or accepted various criticisms of her lesson.

In the afternoon visitors were conducted for archæological and geological walks, which were much enjoyed by those who went. Unfortunately, neither of us was among the number. Later in the afternoon Miss Burns entertained us at a garden party at the Clifton High School for Girls, and here the six students who attended for part, at least, of the Conference were able to meet. A delightful series of little songs and poems was given by the smaller girls of the school, and violin solos and songs by old girls. "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" was exceedingly well represented, the enunciation and expression being quite out of the common.

In the evening Mr. David kindly entertained us at Clifford College. We first inspected the laboratories, library, etc. Some of the elder boys showed us chemical experiments, the most exciting being with liquid air. At 8.45 the Musical Society gave us a most enjoyable short

concert, which opened with an organ solo by a boy of fourteen. Then followed some of Cecil Sharp's folk-songs, given with splendid go and enjoyment by the trebles of the College Choir. With violin and 'cello solos and more folk-songs, which were heartily encored, our concert came to an early end, much to our regret. It was altogether a most enjoyable evening.

On Sunday evening a special service was held at the beautiful Perpendicular church of St. Mary, Redcliff. The sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Primatt Maud, the text being, "And the snuffers were pure gold." The Vicar said that in the service of God the instruments must not only be of the best possible workmanship, but of the best possible material; that to the parents and teachers is given the sacred duty of educating the young. "Are these instruments of pure gold?"

The paper on Monday by Dr. Symes, Medical Officer to Clifton College, and by Mr. Spence, an assistant master, were thought by many to be the most interesting of the Conference. Dr. Symes' paper on "Nervous Children," especially, made a great impression, for the very important consideration of health seems to appeal more generally than any other part of education. It is a great temptation to quote from this paper, but as it will probably be published as a pamphlet, and will certainly appear in the *Parents' Review*, it would be superfluous to do so. Much of the discussion which followed rather wandered from the point, but some of it was interesting. Stress was laid on the power of public opinion, and the audience were urged to bring Dr. Symes's paper to the notice of heads of schools.

This was followed by an intensely interesting lecture on "Spiritual Joy," given by Miss Carta Sturge.

In the afternoon Mr. J. H. Bradley (Head Master of Bedales) spoke on "Joy in Dance and Drama," which he considered to be highly important factors in education. By dance he meant more especially historic dances, and by

drama either plays from history, acted by the children, or the acting of scenes from Greek Drama or from Shakespeare. He emphasised the importance of fostering the corporate spirit in the children by letting one play be the work of the whole school; even the least talented child could take part as one of a mob, or in constructing the scenery, drawing the curtains, scene-shifting, etc. There should be no "star" or calls before the curtain. Those who knew how successfully Mr. Bradley has carried out these ideas in his large co-education school realised how well fitted he was to speak on the subject.

Mr. Spence's witty speech on "Enthusiasm for Humanity: the teaching of Civics," was most stimulating and suggestive, and our enjoyment of it was increased by his beautiful delivery. The paper bristled with points. We were told how, as a boy, he enjoyed the romance of history in Scott, in Macaulay's "Lays," in Kingsley, and revelled in the "spacious days of great Elizabeth,"—and then he went to school and was taught history, which became as dry as the mouse's tail in "Alice." It was refreshing, too, to hear his condemnation of the ordinary text-book. He considered that Civics (or citizenship) should be taught from history, e.g., the social questions of Queen Elizabeth's time might be compared with the Poor Law of the present day. There should be debates, questions, and also definite lessons on the constitution, the administration of laws, etc., which should as far as possible be illustrated by concrete examples.

After this lecture, Lady Campbell, Mrs. Franklin, Mrs. Howard Glover, and Mrs. Walter Rea received the members of the Conference at the Queen's Hotel, and they seemed to appreciate this opportunity of making each other's acquaintance.

In the evening an Educational Concert was given, in which Miss R. Button, who has written on the subject in the *Parents' Review* for January, February, and March, took part. Miss M. Lloyd, in a short address, which pre-

ceded the concert, spoke of the educational value of music. Even if no instrument is taken up, singing should form an important part of the children's education, this being the natural instinct of nearly every child. Part-singing and orchestral work should be learnt, if possible, and last, but not least, they should hear *good* music. The Clifton programmes were arranged with the idea of helping students to a knowledge of the history, unity, and development of music.

On Tuesday morning Miss Tomlins spoke on "The Joy of Life." Her text was, "Get that thou mayest give," and she maintained that we should give our real selves to the world, and show the joy we felt. Her lecture, which was most interesting, must lose much without the personality and the dramatic illustrations. Miss Tomlins seems to have done wonders in America by her peculiar methods of physical culture, in helping people to overcome self-consciousness, and to express themselves naturally. Her aim is to obtain perfect harmony of "heart, mind, and body." She does not desire to impose her own personality, but to draw out that of her pupils, and she gave us a few of the principles upon which she works. Perhaps the charming defence of the English character by the chairman, Miss Geraldine Hodgson (Lecturer on Education at the Bristol University) made us feel more kindly about the lecture than we might otherwise have done. The lecture provoked an interesting discussion.

A Discussion Meeting followed, at which Mrs. Franklin and Miss Parish answered various questions about the principles and methods of the Union.

In the afternoon we were entertained by Miss Shekleton at the Redland High School for Girls, and had the great treat of hearing Miss Shedlock speak on the "Joy of Fairy Tales," illustrated by tales from Hans Andersen and others, told in her own inimitable way.

Mr. David, headmaster of Clifton College, brought us

back from fairyland in an inspiring address on "The Child's Inheritance: How it strikes a public school master."

We are sure that Lady Campbell expressed the feelings of every visitor, when at the close of the Conference she thanked those in Bristol who had helped so much to make the week a success. And a success it certainly was—perhaps one of the most successful and enjoyable of any Conference. Besides the increased ardour of those who already belonged to the Union, ten new members joined, and many more became keenly interested, and are likely to join later, while a school with ninety girls will probably join the P.U.S. The attendance, never below a hundred, was usually two hundred; while at meetings at which outsiders were invited there were as many as five and six hundred.

We end as we began, by saying that, after all, the lectures were not the chief part. Everyone seems to have felt the spirit of the friendliness and good-will with which we were received, and which added so much to our enjoyment. We only wish more students could have been present.

V.R.S.

M.E.F.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE HYDE PARK DEMONSTRATION ON SUNDAY, JUNE 21ST, BY ONE WHO TOOK PART IN IT.

ALL honour to the hard workers of the National Women's Social and Political Union, led by Mrs. Pankhurst, who organised so efficiently and carried out so successfully this huge demonstration in Hyde Park, to demand of the present Government "Votes for Women." Whether people approve of their methods or not, no one can deny that it is these methods that have made this movement a burning question of the time, and have brought it into the range of practical politics.

Space will not permit me to write at length on this subject, but all readers of the "Pianta" who have the chance of attending W.S.P.U. meetings will do well not to miss them.

To come back to Suffrage Sunday. Fortunately the weather favoured the movement, and it was a perfect day, bright sunshine with a cool summer breeze. My father, sister, and myself arrived at Marylebone Station at 1.30, and met the special train from the Midlands, and joined the Nottingham contingent. May I just mention here that seventy special trains were run from all parts of England to bring in supporters, and people came from such distant parts as Lancashire, Yorkshire, Wales, Cornwall, and Devon, to march in one or other of the seven great processions.

Our procession, which included people from Huddersfield, Sheffield, Nottingham, Loughborough, Leicester, Rugby, and certain districts of London, was ready to start just after two. Headed by the mounted police, a full band, and one of the big presentation banners, we started off to the strains

of martial music. As we were walking, one of my friends turned to me and said: "Don't you feel as if you are writing on the pages of history?" And I certainly did! The streets were thronged with interested spectators, and out of every window all along the route we saw people watching us, and heard them cheering us on. I cannot tell you *how* long the procession was, because we were marching quite near the front; but I *do* know that after we had marched into the Park, and round to our particular platform, the procession was still coming in at the Park gates, and we were only one of seven such processions.

Neither can I at all describe the size of the crowd, because I was one of it; but people who were able to wander round the outskirts of it, or who were able to climb up on anything and see the whole, say that never has such a demonstration taken place before on any occasion whatever. The number was computed at something near a million.

The colours of the Union—green, white, and purple—were very much in evidence; badges, ties, belts, scarves, hat-bands, etc., and many were the ingenious ways in which the colours had been used for hat trimmings. The banners were splendid, too, as many as 700 being used in the procession.

I can only tell you what happened round the particular platform (of which there were *twenty* altogether) at which we were stationed; but if the newspaper reports of *that* platform are a sample of the whole reports, there is not much truth in them.

There was *absolutely* no disorder whatever, and our three speakers, Miss Nell Kenny, Miss Higgins, and Miss Brook, all spoke for their appointed time, and had *no* difficulty in making themselves heard, and in keeping the crowd quiet. At five o'clock the resolution: "That this meeting demands votes for women without delay," was put to the crowd, and was carried unanimously amidst cheers. Naturally there was some good-humoured banter, various remarks and

many questions from the crowd, and what struck us perhaps more than anything was the wonderfully smart repartee from the speakers. They never seemed at a loss for a suitable answer in any single instance, and their answers were in all cases so humorous, and so very much to the point that the laugh was always against the questioner.

After the resolution was passed, the crowd quietly—at any rate, so far as we saw!—wended its way out of the Park, and so ended this huge demonstration.

What the result of it will be, it is, as yet, too early to say. Despite all opposition, though, these leaders of this movement may win the day in the end, for as they say, "We are in the fight to the finish," and we, who perhaps have not the same courage and enthusiasm as they have, can at least sympathise with them, and give them what support we can. While, if there are some who do not, as yet, take any interest in the movement, may I ask them not to oppose it, or say hard things of the leaders until they have heard some of the best speakers, or read some of their literature? In any case, don't believe all you read about the Suffragettes in the newspapers. Their own paper, *Votes for Women*, is published weekly on Thursdays, price 1d.

M. ROTHERA.